

## Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 OIC-02

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FM AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1939

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, NS

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC SUPPORT FOR LOS

REF: STATE 034477

1. LEADER OF SURINAM DELEGATION AT GENEVA TO BE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS CORNELUS DESIRE OOFT. MIN OOFT, 54, WAS BORN PARAMARIBO AND EDUCATED IN PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS HERE BEFORE GRADUATING IN POLITICAL SCIENCE, THEN LAW, IN HOLLAND. HE HAS HELD POSITIONS AS MINISTER OF ECONOMICS, DIRECTOR OF HOME AFFAIRS MINISTRY, STAFFER IN MINISTRY GENERAL AFFAIRS, ACTING CLERK OF PARLIAMENT (STATEN) AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. HE IS ALSO PROFESSOR OF CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW AT UNIVERSITY OF SURINAM. OOFT IS OF ASIAN/CREOLE ANCESTRY; HIS WIFE APPEARS TO BE TOO.

2. SYMPATHETICALLY DISPOSED TOWARD U.S., OOFT IS DEVOUT CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL, LEFTISH NATIONALIST SENSITIVE TO SURINAM'S COLONIAL ANTECEDENTS, AND A FOUNDER-MEMBER OF THE CATHOLIC LEFT-OF-CENTER PROGRESSIVE SURINAM PEOPLES PARTY WHICH OOFT CHARACTERIZES AS THE "CONSCIENCE OF THE COALITION" GOVERNMENT. HE IS ACTIVE IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FIELDS AND IS MEMBER OF LIONS CLUB. AS TO POLITICAL/ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY, HAS SAID HE FAVORS "RESPONSIBLE" CAPITALISM ADAPTABLE TO CHANGING SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

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EM OOFT HIGHLY INTELLIGENT, HARD WORKER WIDELY NOTED FOR LEGAL EXPERTISE, HAS PUBLISHED "DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAW IN SURINAM." WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TAKE HIGHLY LEGALISTIC APPROACH TO LOS PROCEEDINGS, THOUGH HE FLEXIBLE, HAS SENSE OF HUMOR. HE WILL ARDENTLY PURSUE POSITIONS HE CONCEIVES AS ATTAINABLE IN SURINAMS INTEREST AS SMALL COASTAL STATE.

4. POLITICAL AIDE TO MIN PRESIDENT INFORMS US GOS WILL CONTINUE TO ENDORSE "SANTO DOMINGO DECLARATION," 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE AND 12 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA. THIS WAS SOURCE OF FRICTION WITH NETHERLANDS AT CARACAS CONFERENCE. SURINAM WILL FIELD OWN DELEGATION FOR FIRST TIME AT GENEVA, WHERE IT WILL HAVE OBSERVER STATUS. HOWEVER, ONE SURINAMER, AS YET UNNAMED, WILL BE MEMBER DUTCH DELEGATION.

5. ALTHOUGH NOT YET APPOINTED TO GOS DELEGATION, I.A. AKRUM, HEAD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUREAU, EXPECTS HE AND H. LIONARRONS WILL BE PARTICIPANTS. AKRUM IS MIDDLE-AGED EAST INDIAN MEMBER OF DUTCH CIVIL SERVICE ON CONTRACT TO SURINAM, WHERE HE BORN. HE IS LAWYER, SOMETHING OF EXPERT ON LOS, BUT HAS NO POLICY-MAKING ROLE IN GOS. HE IS FRIENDLY, GREGARIOUS, VERY STATUS CONSCIOUS, HIGHLY FLATTERABLE, INTELLIGENT, AND ENERGETIC. AKRUM OFTEN NOT KEPT IN PICTURE BY SUPERIORS, THOUGH SOMETIMES A GOOD SOURCE, AND HIS ADVICE APPEARS RARELY TO BE SOUGHT.

6. LIONARRONS, AN UNDER-DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE MINISTRY, IS FISHERIES EXPERT WHO HAD PROMINENT ROLE IN CASTLE AND COOK-GOS NEGOTIATIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF SHRIMPING JOINT-VENTURE (SAIL). HE IS BROTHER OF EDITOR OF POLITICALLY MODERATE LOCAL DAILY (AND OCCASIONALLY SUBSTITUTES FOR HIM) GIVEN TO SENSATIONALISM, OFTEN FAVORING OPPOSITION PARTIES.

7. REFTEL RECEIVED LATE YESTERDAY, GIVING US LITTLE TIME DEVELOP INFO TO MEET FEB 19 DEADLINE. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DETAILS OF GOS POSITIONS RE LOS AS AVAILABLE.  
FLANEWIN

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PINR, NS, (DESIRE OOFT, CORNELIUS), (AKRUM, I A), (LIONARRONS, H)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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